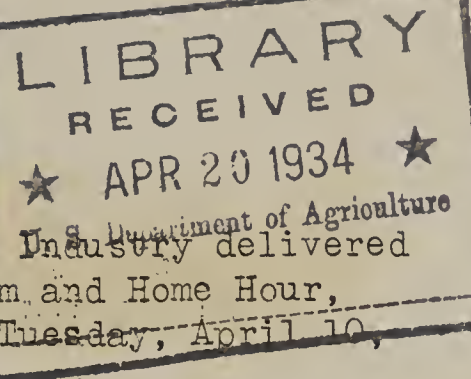


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THE GARDEN CALENDAR



A radio discussion by W. R. Beattie, Bureau of Plant Industry delivered in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home Hour, broadcast by a network of 50 associate NBC radio stations, Tuesday, April 10, 1934.

Hello Folks: If somebody were to walk up to you and hand you a check for \$30 to \$40 and say "Here's that money I owe you, and I am sorry to have kept you waiting so long," what would you do? Fall in a swoon perhaps, especially if you never expected the party to pay anyway, and the check was a complete surprise. Well, that's exactly what happened to me the other day, and I rushed over to the bank and deposited the check, then on my way back I stopped to look in a store window and there was the suit of clothes that I've been wanting for the past three or four months. I didn't buy the suit but am still wearing the old one, and within the past three days I have thought of at least twenty perfectly good and proper ways to spend that money. I haven't said a word around home about getting that money, because that would mean twenty more good ways to spend it.

Most any of us could look around our homes this spring and find at least twenty good ways to spend a few dollars in repairs to the buildings and fences, painting the buildings, planting shrubbery or trees, fixing up the lawn, building a new fence around the garden, laying walks around the house, getting a little new furniture, having the automobile repaired or repainted, and so on almost without end. There is something about the spring of the year when the grass is greening, the buds swelling, and everything taking on new life that makes all of the defects and the neglected things stand right out like sore thumbs so you can't help noticing them.

In my boyhood days we all had a mortal dread of Spring Housecleaning, that is everybody did but Mother for I think she took a keen delight in turning everything inside out and giving the whole house a complete renovating. It often fell to my lot to help with this spring cleaning and with the house put in order we turned our attention to the yard and the garden and the entire home surroundings were given a general sprucing up. On certain occasions, usually about one spring in three, we gave the house a couple of coats of paint, but everywhere there was a general cleanup of the home surroundings. At that time I did not attach any particular significance to those annual cleanups but now as I look back I can readily understand why our place came to be noted for its neat and comfortable appearance.

I took a trip through the country one day last week and everywhere I saw home owners cleaning up the dead leaves and grass on their lawns and in their flower borders, trimming shrubbery, planting out shrubbery and roses and doing a great many things that will make their homes more attractive during the summer. I don't imagine that many of these folks had received a surprise check that they never expected to get but they were going right ahead on general principles and making their home surroundings just as attractive as possible with the means at their disposal. What I saw on that trip made me heartily ashamed of the appearance of my own place and I have since been working early and late trying to get things tidied up a bit, and the best part of it I haven't gone very deep in the spending for what I am doing. There were some low and bare spots in the lawn, these have been filled with new soil and leveled. It is true that I will have to purchase a few pounds of

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grass seed, either that or go out to some field and dig and transport sod to cover these places. I have made adjustments in the shrubbery, moving a small but promising young shrub here and there, trimming those that have grown too tall and working a little good soil into the perennial borders.

No doubt there are hundreds of my friends of the Farm and Home Hour family who have places like mine that need a general spring cleanup. I know it to be a fact that you can often very greatly improve your home surroundings by a new hours work and at very little cost. Now is the time for many of us to fix up the flower beds, get out the box of flower seeds saved from last year and start our spring and summer flower gardens. You southern folks started your flower gardens some time ago and you are now enjoying them, in fact some of you are probably beginning to experience trouble with weeds and grass, but don't let the grass win out but go right on planting flowers and you can have a lovely summer garden.

There are so many things that may be done with the annual flowering plants, especially the climbers. I knew of a case where an unsightly old shed was completely covered and transformed into a thing of beauty by planting moonvines and training them on strings and another case where an old dilapidated building was screened from view by planting a packet of mixed gourd seeds. Porches may be screened with Janpaese morning glories and you can find hundreds of ways in which quick-growing annual flowering plants may be used to hide or soften undesirable views about the home.

There is another angle to this whole matter of improving the home surroundings and that is the psychological effect that flowers and beautiful trees and shrubbery have upon the minds of the boys and girls.. They are proud of their home and even though they may object to doing much of the work of caring for the home surroundings they really do take pride in the appearance of their home. Remember that the home surroundings should be beautiful as you look out from the home as well as from the external view. Plant the choicest flowers where you can see them from the living room or the kitchen window and so give yourselves the full enjoyment of looking at them.